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ABSTRACT

Shifts in the enrollments and curricula of two-year colleges over the past 15 years have underscored the need for community college educators to develop a synthesis of career-occupational and liberal arts education. This task is especially important given the career-oriented goals and employed status of most community college students, the essential skills and abilities which liberal education can contribute to career advancement, and the inability of a liberal education alone to promote a full, productive life. Within this framework, a month-long summer institute was sponsored by the Community College Humanities Association to bring together teams of business and humanities faculty from 22 community colleges across the country to discuss ways of integrating business education and the humanities. Each team developed a rationale for implementing this integration at its home institution. These rationales fell into three broad categories: (1) the value inherent in the study of business and the humanities; (2) the value which integrated studies has for the individual, and (3) the value of integration for business, the individual, and rationale statements developed by institute participants which show the need for such integrative projects and the value which participants attach to the synthesis of business and humanities education. (HB)

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# A Rationale for Integrating the Humanities and Business Education in Community Colleges.

From the Community College Humanities Association/
National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute

June 7 - July 3, 1981

Utica, New York

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# A RATIONALE FOR INTEGRATING THE HUMANITIES AND BUSINESS EDUCATION IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES

From CCHA/NEH Summer Institute

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"The challenge before community colleges today is to unify in an appropriate manner the liberal arts and the practical arts. This integration must occur if community colleges are to maintain their status as institutions of higher education."

Donald D. Schmeltekopf, President
Community College Humanities Association

## I

Comprehensive community colleges across the country are facing a perplexing problem as they prepare for the current and future decades: how to respond to a growing demand for career-occupational education while maintaining a tradition of liberal education for a student population that is increasingly unprepared for either. Fearful that the curriculum may become devoted entirely to the three C's--compensatory, career, and community education--faculty and administrators are seeking ways to preserve a balance between the traditional curricular components of the community college, the liberal arts and the practical arts.

For many years university-parallel programs in the arts and sciences dominated the curriculum. As late as 1965 only 13 percent of the nation's full-time two-year college students were enrolled in career-occupational programs. Since 1965 a number of social, economic, and demographic changes have dramatically altered this proportion. By 1978 the number enrolled in technical and occupational programs had grown to 52 percent. Today more than 60 percent of all community college students are enrolled in occupational programs of one kind or another and the percentage seems likely to increase in the foreseeable future.

When occupational-program enrollments were low there was little concern for bringing about a synthesis of liberal and practical education. The traditional disciplines in the arts and sciences tended to be separated from preparation for the world of work and vice versa. This separation, it may be argued, was benign 15 years ago and before. But given the curriculum shifts noted above, separation is clearly no longer a benign phenomenon. Career-occupational programs that concentrate on entry-level job skills promote a form of learning that may have little connection with the intellectual and personal development of students. Further, a general education that does not address directly the activities of production and consumption promotes a form of learning that is obviously incomplete. If community colleges are to fulfill their function as institutions of higher education, they must attend to educating students in those particular subject areas that help students connect the workplace and total human experience.

By their nature community colleges occupy that zone where the practical and the theoretical domains meet. Here, if anywhere, the division between work and life as a whole is seen to be artificial. Nearly three quarters of community college students are employed while they pursue their college studies and the majority reside at home rather than in dormitories. These students cannot remove themselves from daily life to obtain dispassionate distance for reflective contemplation. This obviously has curricular ramifications since the insights of liberal learning are daily checked against the realities of practical life. Liberal education must therefore address the need students have to embellish and expand their lives with a cultural dimension that can provide meaning and satisfaction which no work alone can provide. It must, nevertheless, do so to a great extent in the context of the contemporary world of work.

In addition, the liberal arts concentrate on abilities and ways of thinking that are indispensable for advancement in one's career. The ability to communicate well, to reason effectively, to appreciate alternative points of view, and to apply value judgments enhance a person's potential both personally and professionally. These are abilities that the liberal arts, and in particular the humanities, should seek to develop in direct ways. Indeed, the enhancement of such skills should be the goal of every discipline.

We must not, however, commit the error of thinking that a liberal arts education alone is sufficient for a full, productive life. The lack of preparedness of many liberal arts graduates for the work world should convince us that the traditional curriculum too closely resembles form without content when viewed from a contemporary perspective. The transfer of liberal arts skills to practical matters often does not seem to take place, and liberal arts graduates are notoriously unprepared in the areas of career awareness, job-seeking skills, practical abilities, and applied economics.

The deficiency of the practical dimension in liberal learning and the narrowness of training in many occupational programs have brought the dialectic of liberal and occupational education to a crisis point. Their academic resolution must break new curricular and institutional ground. How community colleges achieve this synthesis may well become the defining characteristic of these institutions in the future--just as their dual curricula have distinguished them in the past.

There is no reason to believe that the fusion of liberal and occupational education need be constrained by the models of the past. Student populations are changing, as are social and human needs, and the heretofore unquestioned characteristics of community colleges--open admissions, transfer programs, occupational preparation, compensatory education--may all have to be significantly modified in achieving the desired synthesis. One point must be emphasized: the integration of liberal and occupational education cannot be solely a curricular goal. It must embody curricular restructuring to be sure, but it must also be represented in the attitudes of the faculty and administrators, and it must ultimately be reflected in how community colleges understand and advocate their missions.

II

Given these various considerations, the question is, how do we begin the synthesis? This was the issue addressed by the Community College Humanities Association in sponsoring the NEH-funded summer institute on "Integrating the Humanities and Business in Community Colleges." The institute, hosted by Mohawk Valley Community College, brought together teams of business and humanities faculty from 22 community colleges across the country for a one-month study of the issues connected with the integration of business education and the humanities.

Each participating team was selected on the basis of a proposed project for achieving the desired integration at its home institution. At the institute they were asked to develop a rationale for this integration which could be used to justify the project to a variety of audiences at their colleges, i.e., students, faculty, advisory boards, and administrators. The following excerpts from their rationale statements show the serious need for such integrative projects and the value the participants attach to this synthesis. In general their rationales fell into three categories: 1) the value inherent in the study of both business and humanities; 2) the value integrated studies has for the student; and 3) the value of integration for business, the individual, and society.

THE VALUE INHERENT IN THE STUDY OF BUSINESS AND THE HUMANITIES:

> Business education contributes . . . specialized skills, career knowledge, and a pragmatic viewpoint. The humanities provide the basic thinking and communication skills along with an appreciation of cultures past and present, an opportunity to form critical and informed judgments, an understanding of the necessity for flexibility in a changing world, and an awareness of values, their importance and role in human experience.
>
> Martha Afzal & William Harwood
> Dutchess Community College (NY)

> Business, particularly <u>big</u> <u>business</u>, has had a major influence on the development of religion, education, politics, and law as well as our personal values, attitudes, and lifestyles . . . Our complex, highly technological society appears in need of combining practical, analytical, conceptual, and technological skills to enable people to make critical judgments, moral decisions, social policy, understand diverse cultures, and see connections between society's past and present in order to prepare for the future.
>
> Fred Light
> Cypress College (CA)

The humanities offer perspective. Humanistic study allows the student to be in contact with great minds facing the entire range of human problems. In an age of specialization the humanities offer an overview. In an era of political, economic, and intellectual turmoil, the humanities offer. . . a vantage point from which to entice and contrast.

John Wheeler
Union College (NJ)

The humanities help individuals develop an analytical and critical stance regarding all human activities, and thus, in a sense, to describe the degree of humanity of those activities. Business activities, personal as well as corporate, involving deliberate and free choices, constitute a large component of the array of human endeavors and activities; therefore the humanities must be made an integral component of the preparation of persons going into business.

Edward K. Atzenhoefer & Lloyd Monnin
Clark Technical College (OH)

The impact of world, economic, political, and social issues on the developments of our lives--as citizens, employees, employers, consumers--and the ensuing complexity of problems, dictates the need for students to understand the interrelationships of multiple disciplines simultaneously.

Stan Flax & Beate Schulz
Community College of Baltimore (MD)

Humanities courses teach effective communication. They teach business students to think critically by offering varied viewpoints and by challenging the students' preconceptions. In their analysis of human relationships they reveal the value of interpersonal skills . . . Study of the humanities offers a way of placing what one does in the world of work within a larger context of one's behavior as a human being. The fundamental premise upon which a liberal education is based is that such an education liberates.

Gerald Browne & Trude Pang
Kauai Community College (HI)

If humanities and business educators are to integrate their efforts, understanding is not enough, appreciation is not enough. Knowledge, by itself, is not enough. Faculty in both areas must develop all these qualities. At the same time they must remain open to the unique models and approaches available through their colleagues' areas of study.

William Krieger & Leslie Price
Fort Steilacoom Community College (WA)

Some educators limit their role to transmitting only values which are functional, practical, short-term and egoistic. There is more to human life, such as those traditional values inherent to a liberal arts/humanities education; these values are intrinsic, long-term, and sometimes altruistic.

Gary Acquaviva
Walters State Community College (TN)

THE VALUE INTEGRATED STUDIES HAS FOR THE STUDENT

The integration of business with the humanities enhances the prospects that a humanities student be able to:

develop a greater awareness, early in an academic career, of a variety of vocational choices;

recognize the contribution of business to American life both past and present;

participate more effectively in the American economy both as a producer and consumer;

apply problem solving techniques in a practical context;

enlarge the spectrum of available career choices.

John Deans & Keith Yandoh
Jefferson Community College (NY)

Community colleges should prepare students not only for business careers, but also for social, public, and other enterprises, and provide for life-long learning.

Ervin Betts & Milton Goldstein
Norwalk Community College (CT)

Knowledge of the world of business cannot fail to help our liberal arts students find jobs. A broadly based, well-rounded education will help students of both the humanities and business pursue careers rather than mere jobs.

John Wheeler
Union College (NJ)

Research about characteristics that make an effective employee indicates that in addition to specific job skills, effective business people need the ability to communicate, think, reason, solve problems, as well as the ability to organize and achieve goals. Students need to develop self-confidence and self-awareness. They also need to develop an understanding of different cultures. This understanding will help students build specific skills that are of increasing demand in today's business arena, e.g., work in international trade. Besides this, ours is a pluralistic society and

students need to combat possible provincial perspectives.

Rita Cooney & Kathleen Katims
Spokane Community College (WA)

The student will develop skills (analysis, interpretation, synthesis) which are usable in every academic area and which are highly saleable in business and industry . . . The student will have a basis for "transfer of learning" because of the skills developed. He will be able to make connections between various subject areas studied.

Patricia Yantz & Fred Janke
Tompkins-Cortland Community College (NY)

The integration of business and humanities allows students to gain a better understanding of the role of business in society, its contributions, its needs and problems. It allows students of the humanities to gain insights into those contributions they can make to business management . . . It enables students to apply concepts of cultural sensitivity towards other societies.

Stan Flax & Beate Schulz
Community College of Baltimore (MD)

The bottom line is that both business and the humanities will profit from a mutual exchange of values, principles and insights. The community college student, as a consumer of knowledge and learning, will be enriched in the process.

John Cadigan
Erie Community College (NY)

Community college students in occupational programs need to become acquainted with the ethics, values and enrichment derived from the humanistic studies in order to cope with many of the issues of life. Similarly, all students in all disciplines should have at least a minimal exposure to certain basics of business and the marketplace as a means of bringing a measure of practicality to their lives. Cross-fertilization of the strengths and values of the humanities with business, and the strengths and practicalities of business with the humanities, will be fruitful in the enrichment of both disciplines. Moreover, it will improve the educational opportunities of all community college students.

Dick Adams & Sam Brewer
College of the Redwoods (CA)

Insights available through the humanities may add an important dimension of understanding, not only of the peoples and cultures being studied but of the context in which any society operates and the issues that society has to confront. Such broadening opportunities are often lacking in community college business programs where exposure to humanistic studies is limited. That limitation is partly a structural one, for many career programs have few options for electives, especially in the humanities. But perhaps an even greater limitation is the dearth of exposure to the arts for many career-minded students and, concomitantly, little sense of the range of insight and awareness, not to mention pleasure, that such an exposure can afford.

Philip Kukura & Joseph Marron
Bunker Hill Community College (MA)

THE VALUE OF INTEGRATION FOR BUSINESS, THE INDIVIDUAL, AND SOCIETY

People cannot want what they do not know! While business education prepares individuals for the world of work, the humanities insist upon reminding them of the limitless possibilities of living. Business can provide us with the skills to survive; the humanities ask us to question why it might be important to do so.

Phil Landers & Jim Logue
Williamsport Area Community College (PA)

The integration of the humanities and business disciplines could go a long way toward developing questioning, probing, involved, concerned citizens (workers and managers) who understand the significance of and are alert to meaningful social change in our country.

Fred Light
Cypress College (CA)

Business perspectives can enlighten the humanist in other ways as well. One way is by helping to elucidate how the arts themselves operate and may be encouraged as businesses (whether a city symphony, repertory theater, or a publisher) . . . Integrating business and humanities can ultimately profit society at large, we hope, by helping to solve problems that are of concern to both disciplines and that require the knowledge and approaches of both. As we look to the future, the period of time for which we are training and preparing students, we see such problems as dissatisfaction with work and leisure time opportunities, decreasing productivity in the work force, scarcity of resources, a tremendous shift in our American demographic makeup, an international interdependence of nations and individuals, and constant change in all aspects of life. In joining efforts to deal with present and future problems, we will be making education

relevant to our students and helping them to cope with change and, when needed, to initiate change.

Cynthia Vanhooser & Joan Nucifora
Columbia State Community College (TN)

The separation of one's work from one's private life is an unnatural separation: each aspect must complete the other. Business requires skills associated with the humanities: ability to communicate; ability to organize ideas; understanding of the process of change; acquaintance with sociological trends; and an awareness of man's existence in time. But equally, everyone in society needs the skills acquired in business education, namely an understanding of: the free enterprise system; the relationship of the private sector to government; basic economic principles; the profit necessary in business; and the nature of the world in which business is conducted.

Frances Osborn
Monroe Community College (NY)

As we see it, humanities studies should help people to function as integrated human beings. The study of the humanities can change people positively, hence affect the whole of their lives.

Annievette Loyselle &
Leticia Pagan-Vargas
Colegio Universitario Metropolitano (PR)

Perhaps one of the primary educational tasks of the present age is to learn how to integrate the facts and values of the marketplace with the facts and values of the classroom . . . Together humanities and business may nurture the next generation to live fulfillingly within the epanded global, intercultural horizon to which the evolution of our techne has brought us.

Arthur Gump & Leonard Herzstein
Skyline College (CA)

The integration of business and humanities encourages mutual recognition of the dignity of each. When both work together, there is responsible production and consumership, wise selection of career and leisure time, respect for the financial risk-takers and the philosophers, and a recognition of both the importance and historical background of change. In effect, business and humanities together can show us how to use our resources--people, materials, money, and time--prudently and how to live hopefully.

Diana DeLuca & Emi Troeger
Windward Community College (HI)

> On most of our campuses a separation exists between the business and humanities departments. Conflicting viewpoints make cooperation difficult. Yet, it is obvious from all that we read and know about the world of work, that a mutual respect and caring between these two academic areas is necessary and demanded by the men and women who manage American businesses, and by those of us who teach the future employees of these companies and the future citizens of the living world. If we make the effort to discover the commonalities between these disciplines, we will stand nearer our intended integration. For, as the playwright Henrik Ibsen wrote in Ghosts, the two elements which make up human happiness are "the joy of work" and "the joy of living."
>
> Charles F. Thompson
> Greater Hartford Community College (CT)

III

While other points could be made, these excerpts capture in one way or another the essential justifications for the integration of the humanities and business education. In a larger sense these statements, taken together, provide arguments for the unity of the practical arts and the liberal arts in all curricula. The bane of contemporary curricula in community colleges and elsewhere is the disconnectedness of subject matter. This separation of learning is not only reductionistic, but also unrepresentative of actual human experience. As Alfred North Whitehead has written:

> The antithesis between a technical /or practical/ and a liberal education is fallacious. There can be no adequate . . . /practical/ education which is not liberal, and no liberal education which is not . . . /practical/: that is, no education which does not impart both technique and intellectual vision. In simpler language, education should turn out the pupil with something he knows well and something he can do well. This intimate union of practice and theory aids both.

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